invention is applied to the portable terminal 1, it may otherwise be applied to a vehicle-carried terminal. In this instance, a URL is registered together with image data of road-signs, signboards and billboards along a road and detailed information is stored in a predetermined WWW 5 server in advance. Then, when a user fetches an image of one of the road-signs, signboards and billboards, detailed information of it is read out from the predetermined WWW server.

Further, while, in the embodiment described above, the 10 portable terminal 1 accesses the WWW data base 3 to perform retrieval when an image is fetched, image data and position data may be stored once into the RAM 23 so that, later at a different location (for example, after the user comes home), retrieval may be performed making use of the image 15 data and the position data.

Furthermore, while, in the embodiment described above. the GPS 26 is utilized for detection of a position, the PHS (Personal Handy phone System) may be utilized alternatively. Since the PHS employs comparatively weak radio waves, a radio wave of a PHS terminal arrives only at a neighboring relay station or stations. Accordingly, in other words, when a relay station receives a radio wave, a PHS terminal is used around the relay station. Consequently, the position (region) in which a PHS terminal is used can be 25 specified to a narrower range.

Further, where a PHS circuit is provided in the modem 27, communication with the host machine 4 and position detection can be performed by the PHS circuit. Consequently, the 30 GPS 26 is unnecessary. Accordingly, the number of parts of the portable terminal 1 can be reduced, and the portable terminal 1 can be formed as an apparatus of a reduced size.

In addition, while, in the embodiment described above, a WWW of the Internet is utilized, it is otherwise possible to 35 built up a similar system in a computer network other than the Internet to perform retrieval of information.

Having now fully described the invention, it will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art that many changes and modifications can be made thereto without departing 40 from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth herein.

B 1. An information retrieval apparatus for retrieving information from a data base which contains registration data

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including position data, image data and designation information for retrieval of additional information comprising:

imaging means for obtaining an image;

location detection means for detecting a current position location of said information retrieval apparatus; and

selection means for selecting image data from said data base which corresponds to the image obtained by said imaging means, said image data having position data representing positions in the vicinity of the current position location detected by said location detection means, and said designation information corresponding to said image data for retrieving said additional information.

An information retrieval apparatus according to claim
further comprising reception means for receiving the image data and the designation information via a computer network.

3. An information retrieval apparatus according to claim
2, wherein said reception means has a portable telephone function and is connected to said computer network via a telephone line.

4. An information retrieval apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the designation information is a URL for specifying information stored in a server of a world wide web build up on the Internet.

5. An information retrieval method for retrieving information by information retrieval apparatus from a data base which contains registration data including position data, image data and designation information for retrieval of additional information, comprising the steps of:

obtaining an image;

detecting the current position location of the information retrieval apparatus; and

selecting image data from said data base which corresponds to the image obtained, said image data having position data representing positions in the vicinity of the detected current position location of the information retrieval apparatus, and designation information corresponding to said image data for retrieving said additional information.

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6. An information retrieval apparatus for retrieving information from a database which contains registration data including at least position data and designation information for retrieval of additional information, comprising:

location detection means for detecting a current position location of said information retrieval apparatus; and

selection means for selecting data from said database which corresponds to said detected current position location of said information retrieval apparatus, said selected data having position data representing positions in the vicinity of the detected current position location, said designation information corresponding to said selected data for retrieving said additional information.

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